

## Williams family statement regarding DOJ decision

The U.S. Justice Department's decision not to prosecute Ian Birk for violating the civil rights of the late John T Williams is a great disappointment to his family. It takes away the last chance to have the legality of Birk's actions judged by a group of citizens. It is especially sad that one reason the DOJ decided it couldn't prove a case against Birk is that he could say he was trained to do what he did. That makes it even more urgent to implement the changes in Seattle Police training the DOJ is insisting on.

The family appreciates these reform efforts by the DOJ. They also appreciate the courtesy and respect they have been shown by the federal government and U.S. Attorney Jenny Durkan, with they they met today to learn of and discuss the government's decision.

The family is moving on with other ways to honor their late brother's memory. A totem pole carved in his memory is ready to be raised at the Seattle Center next month, on February 27, John's birthday. See <http://www.facebook.com/Totem.Pole.Project>. Through that and other efforts, the family hopes that John's passing will produce some healing and understanding in this community so his spirit can rest.